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MIDEAST-LEAD FAHMY (RNR130)

WASHINGTON, OCT. 30. REUTER - ISMAIL FAHMY, THE EGYPTIAN ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER, CONFERRED FOR FOUR HOURS TODAY WITH SECRETARY OF STATE HENRY KISSINGER AND SAID AFTERWARDS THE MEETING WAS "CONSTRUCTIVE, BUSINESSLIKE AND FRANK."

FAHMY, WHO IS IN WASHINGTON AS A SPECIAL EMISSARY OF EGYPTIAN PRESIDENT ANWAR SADAT, HAD A MORNING MEETING WITH KISSINGER WHICH WAS FOLLOWED BY A WORKING LUNCH AND FURTHER TALKS AFTERWARDS.

THE MINISTER DECLINED TO MEET WITH THE PRESS AS HE LEFT THE STATE DEPARTMENT BUT MADE HIS COMMENT AS REPORTERS FOLLOWED HIM TO THE DOOR.

ASKED WHETHER HE WOULD BE TALKING DIRECTLY WITH THE ISRAELIS, FAHMY SAID "THIS PROCESS MUST TAKE A LONG TIME."

HE DECLINED TO ANSWER DIRECTLY WHEN ASKED IF HE THOUGHT PEACE WAS NEAR.

THE STATE DEPARTMENT LATER SAID THAT THE SPIRIT OF MONDAY'S MEETING WAS MAINTAINED DURING THE TALKS TUESDAY. BOTH KISSINGER AND FAHMY HAD DESCRIBED MONDAY'S MEETING AS "VERY PROMISING."

A SPOKESMAN SAID THAT THE TWO MEN DISCUSSED THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MIDDLE EAST CEASEFIRE AND "THE LONGER TERM QUESTIONS ABOUT A DURABLE SETTLEMENT IN THE MIDDLE EAST."

THE DEPARTMENT...4TH GRAF.

REUTER WS/D N/YA1707